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**March 11, 2015**

**NEWS RELEASE**

## **Hiking and Camping Tips**

### **El Paso Fire Department and Texas Parks and Wildlife encourage safety**

*El Paso, Texas* – In light of yesterday's Combined Search and Rescue operation at the Transmountain State Park, the El Paso Fire Department and Texas Parks and Wildlife would like to remind the public to practice these safety recommendations when planning outdoor hiking/camping activities.

- Plan before you go. Know rules and regulations. Get current maps of the area.
- Be aware of the types of wildlife in the area by searching the web or calling the ranger station.
- Take plenty of drinking water (more than you may think you will need).
- Take light snacks.
- Check weather conditions and wear proper clothing accordingly. Avoid doing activities during extreme temperatures. Seek shelter in the event of strong winds and thunderstorms.
- Protect yourself from the sun. Use sunblock lotion, wear a long sleeve shirt and long pants, and use a cap or hat.
- Do activities with someone else. If you do activities alone, let somebody else know about your plans.
- Stay on the trail always. Walking off-trail increases your chance of suffering an injury, getting lost, or encountering dangerous wildlife. In addition, desert soils are fragile. Cutting across switchbacks tramples vegetation, erodes the soil and eventually destroys the trail.
- Have a cell or mobile phone for emergencies, but do not rely on them only. Carry with you a whistle, mirror, flag, flashlight, flare or other means to signal your location.

For a list of more detailed hiking and camping tips, the public is encouraged to visit:

<http://www.elpasotexas.gov/fire-department/divisions/fire-prevention>.

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**Media Contact:** Carlos A. Briano  
Fire Public Information Officer  
Cell # (915) 820-9712